

OVERVIEW OF MENTORING

Why is mentoring included in the Worker Training and Assistance Program?

- ▶ Many people with successful careers have had mentors who helped them along the way. Program participants may also benefit from having mentors.
- ▶ Participants (mentees) will be learning new behaviors and new ways of relating to people and mentors can help them with this.
- ▶ Mentors can help mentees cope with the changes in their lives they will be experiencing.
- ▶ Mentors can help mentees think of ways to solve problems that may arise.

Mentor: *“A trusted counselor or guide. Tutor.”*

or

“Someone who takes a personal interest in you and your career and who guides or sponsors your professional development.”

Mentoring:

A deliberate pairing of a more skilled or experienced person with a lesser skilled or experienced one, with the agreed-upon goal of having the lesser skilled person grow and develop with specific life/work skills and competencies.

FUNCTIONS OF THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP

A Mentor...	
Acceptance and Confirmation	lets the mentee know s/he is a valuable person and employee
Role Modeling	sets an example by his/her actions
Friendship	is someone to talk to and share ideas/ concerns with
Empowerment	shares power by giving the mentee advice and information about the organization
Coaching	makes suggestions on effective actions
Sponsorship	can recommend the mentee to colleagues for special projects, jobs, or professional groups
Exposure and Visibility	mentions mentee's name and high lights his/her achievements
Challenging Assignments	helps the mentee with different kinds of work activities
Protection	points out dangers and possible precautions

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN A WORKER TRAINING AND ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MENTOR AND JOB COACH

A mentor advises employees primarily on work/life skill issues such as:

- time management
- balancing work and home commitments
- managing a paycheck and finances
- accepting new responsibilities
- adjusting to a structured lifestyle
- stress management
- how to receive and give constructive criticism

A job coach advises employees primarily on job-related activities such as:

- how to perform technical tasks
- office relationships and etiquette
- professional work habits
- how to prioritize tasks

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Mentor

- Serves as unbiased advisor regarding concerns that may affect job performance.
- Helps build the self confidence of the mentee.
- Provides information about the organization that will assist the mentee in adapting to the culture of the agency and the culture of the work world.
- Establishes clear, open, two-way communication.
- Provides positive suggestions on such issues as time management, balancing work and home commitments, stress management.
- Provides referrals to internal resources for further assistance as needed (such as the WTAP Program Coordinator, Employee Assistance Program, health unit, personnel, and the Career Assistance Center).
- Is a source of information and encouragement.
- Helps develop creative and independent thinking.
- Provides an opportunity for discussing problem-solving strategies prior to trying them out.

Mentee

- Arrives on time to meetings.
- Establishes clear developmental goals.
- Communicates openly about goals and needs.
- Shows initiative and willingness to listen and learn.
- Takes personal responsibility for personal growth and development.
- Uses mentor's time and counsel effectively.

DESIRABLE CHARACTERISTICS OF MENTORS AND MENTEES

A Mentor:

1. Assumes and demonstrates leadership.
2. Demonstrates patience and cooperativeness in working with others.
3. Demonstrates proficiency and initiative in his/her own career path.
4. Is willing to assume responsibility and accountability as a mentor.
5. Is knowledgeable about agency goals, policies, functions, communication channels, training programs, and career paths.
6. Is willing to help mentee set developmental goals.
7. Has the ability to provide constructive feedback.
8. Is aware of resources available within and outside the agency.
9. Is committed to the development of other staff members.
10. Shares personal experiences relevant to the needs of the workplace.
11. Demonstrates the use of tact, diplomacy, and sensitivity in working with others who may be of a different age group, background, or culture.
12. Is able to fulfill required time commitments of being a mentor.

A Mentee:

1. Is goal oriented, and willing to set developmental goals.
2. Is willing to assume responsibility for his/her own growth and development.
3. Actively seeks challenging assignments and greater responsibility.
4. Is receptive to feedback and coaching.
5. Shows initiative and is willing to learn.
6. Is able to fulfill required time commitments of the mentoring relationship.
7. Demonstrates the use of tact, diplomacy, and sensitivity in working with others who may be of a different age group, background, or culture.

RISKS AND REWARDS OF MENTORING

RISKS:

1. Time/energy
2. Exposure of self
3. Risk of mismatch in styles between mentor and mentee
4. Mentee's feeling of inferiority
5. Manipulation by mentor or mentee
6. Relationship causes jealousy in others
7. Over-dependence on the relationship
8. Mentor or mentee withdraws from relationship

REWARDS:

Individual rewards

For the Mentor

- A relationship based on mutual respect
- Fulfillment in knowing you have contributed significantly to another's life
- Opportunity to demonstrate leadership
- Chance to lessen the likelihood of someone repeating your mistakes

For the Mentee

- A relationship based on mutual respect
- Empowerment
- A sense of well-being
- Career success
- Productivity

Organizational rewards

Employees who can handle the difficulties of work and achieve more satisfaction in their work and career.

GUIDELINES FOR WORKING TOGETHER

As you complete your mentoring agreement, think about the following issues:

1. What are the reasons you want to be mentored?
2. How often should mentor and mentee meet?
3. How will you communicate?
4. What are some problems that may arise?
5. How will you handle problems that arise?

MENTORING AGREEMENT FORM

We are both voluntarily entering into a mentoring relationship which we expect will benefit both us and the agency. We want this to be a rewarding experience with most of our time together being spent on developmental activities. The following are mutually agreed upon:

1. The mentoring relationship will last for three years. After an initial period, the relationship will be evaluated and mutually agreed to end or continue for another agreed upon time period.
2. The two of us will meet every _____. While unforeseen circumstances may alter this plan, meeting times will be part of my calendar and I will make plans for each meeting.
3. Each meeting will last a minimum of _____ but not last longer than _____.
4. In between meetings, we will contact each other by _____. In-depth issues will not be handled in this manner, but instead in a face-to-face meeting.
5. We agree that the role of the mentor is to _____

and the role of the mentee is to _____

_____.
6. The mentor agrees to be honest and provide constructive feedback to the mentee and the mentee agrees to be open to feedback and attempt to incorporate suggestions into his/her behavior.
7. We agree to a “no-fault conclusion” of this relationship, if appropriate. Specifically, either of us can end the relationship if we believe it is no longer productive to work together without fault attributed to either of us.

Mentor's Signature

Date

Mentee's Signature

Date

Mentoring Workshop for Mentors

Case Studies

Case 1

Joan has been in the Clerk (GS-303-01) position for six months. She has worked hard and is reliable. Her goal is to move into a more responsible position. Her supervisor believes she needs to develop oral communication skills and become more of a team-player. She's working with her job coach, but isn't progressing fast enough.

Case 2

Frank has been in the Clerk (GS-303-01) position for three months and has not completed assignments. He has had trouble getting to work on time and doesn't seem to get along with his coworkers. He has canceled your last two appointments.

Case 3

Lynda has been in the Clerk (GS-303-01) position for several weeks and her supervisor has noted that she has outstanding secretarial skills, finishes her work quickly, and seems to be getting bored. The supervisor would like to help the employee move up, although there is no opening she would be eligible for at this time.

Case 4

You and Tim have been working together in your mentoring relationship for 2 months. Although you were both uncertain of your roles at first, you have become more comfortable with each other. Lately, Tim has been calling you more and more often. He seems to be having trouble at home and your discussions have begun to reflect more of his home life than his work and career.